

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SPACE EXPLORATION

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, the exploration of space has long united this country. Every American, rich or poor, living in the cities or in the great rural areas that make up our country, can look to the moon knowing that American astronauts planted our flag there. Every time we look up into space, we have something to be proud of, but we know our journey has only just begun.

Mr. Speaker, not too long ago, commercial spaceflight was disregarded as some distant pipedream of the future. But today, thanks to innovation in places like Mojave, California, commercial spaceflights and the spaceports they take off from are the epicenter of space exploration.

These are the places leading in our journey to the great unknown. But as commercial space has ventured into the future, government policy has not kept up. We need to ensure government allows commercial spaceflight to succeed by updating laws to reflect changing circumstances.

Similar to airports, for our spaceports to function, we need to prioritize safety and minimize the risk of structures interfering with the flight path of spacecraft on launch or reentry. The legislation I introduced today that we are voting on gives the FAA the authority they now lack to examine whether structures being built near spaceports will obstruct spaceflight.

With this, those leading our journey into space can remain confident that nothing back on Earth will be slowing them down.

MICHIGAN IS DISENFRANCHISING THE CITIZENS OF FLINT

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, it was reported that, instead of doing what is necessary to fix the Flint water crisis, State of Michigan officials are, instead, focusing on disenfranchising further the people of my hometown.

Through sleight of hand and bureaucratic maneuvers, they are effectively preventing the people of Flint from suing the State government for the harm that has been caused by the State government in my hometown.

Just as when the State installed emergency managers to take over the city of Flint, they are now using obscure legal wrangling to silence the

voices of the people in my community and the people that they elected from representing them in a court of law, from going to court to seek justice, to seek solutions.

So, instead of fixing the problem, not only have they denied the people in Flint the resources necessary to solve the problem that they created but they are denying those very same people access to the judicial process to seek redress. This is outrageous; it is wrong; and it has to stop.

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S CLAIM IS INACCURATE

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, Politico revealed that past wire payments to Iran directly contradict the President's inaccurate claim that the \$1.7 billion ransom payment had to be in cash.

"The United States made at least two separate payments to the Iranian Government via wire transfer within the last 14 months, a Treasury Department official confirmed Saturday, contradicting explanations from President Barack Obama that such payments were impossible. . . .

"In July 2015 . . . the U.S. Government paid the Islamic Republic approximately \$848,000. . . . Then, in April of 2016, the U.S. wired Iran approximately \$9 million. . . ."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President, by his actions, never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Being in New York City yesterday, I saw firsthand the failed legacy of the President. American families are at greater risk of murderous attack today than ever. I am grateful for first responders and the National Guard being everywhere across the city.

GUN SAFETY LAWS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have an important announcement to make. We are in the Nation's Capital where there are not only 700,000 residents but also every major Federal official, and many of the planet's most controversial figures frequent our streets, restaurants, and other public places. Yet, today, D.C. lawyers must defend its rule requiring permits to carry guns in public for good reason.

In today's big cities, illegal guns of all kinds are brought in because Congress has failed to pass a background check law.

D.C. did the right thing; so say four courts of appeals that have already upheld gun safety laws like D.C.'s, requiring a good reason to carry a gun in public.

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL RICE MONTH

(Mr. ABRAHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, the month of September is National Rice Month, a time when we honor the more than 100,000 Americans involved in the rice industry, from the thousands of family farms spread mostly across eight States, to the men and women working in the mills and food processing plants across the country.

The reason September is National Rice Month is because, traditionally, this is when we harvest our rice. Right now, American family rice farmers are harvesting what will end up being about 18 billion pounds of rice off 3 million acres spread across sustainably managed farmland. My district alone, in Louisiana, produces an annual crop worth over \$119 million from over 110,000 planted acres across 11 parishes.

Much of the United States' annual rice production will be exported to more than 120 countries around the globe, and much of that will be distributed as humanitarian aid.

This complex carbohydrate of rice is an excellent source of protein, fiber, energy, and antioxidants. Here in the U.S., white rice is enriched with more than 15 vitamins and minerals and is fortified with folic acid which, by the way, has been proven to dramatically reduce birth defects.

The U.S. rice industry, while it may seem small, provides 125,000 jobs and a whopping \$34 billion impact on the U.S. economy.

CONGRATULATING THE CORPUS CHRISTI ELKS LODGE

(Mr. FARENTHOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the members of the Corpus Christi Elks Lodge for reestablishing Elks in my hometown. Due to some tough times after Hurricane Katrina and declining membership, the local chapter was consolidated with a chapter in Kingsville. But thanks to the dedication of the members of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks, the Corpus Christi chapter will, once again, resume activities on October 27.

For more than 140 years, Elks Lodges have brought much to their communities, including awarding millions of dollars in scholarships, aiding veterans, building golf courses and pools, supporting Scouting Troops, providing education to prevent drug abuse, and helping low-income students attend summer camp.

It is my belief that having the order return to Corpus Christi will be a huge blessing to our community, and I join my friends and neighbors in thanking them for their dedication and service,